

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STOCKH 01348 291204Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 BIB-01 /070 W
-----292026Z 023368 /50

R 290915Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 162
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USNATO

UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 1348

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, SW
SUBJECT: SWEDISH COMMUNIST WORKER'S PARTY HOLDS FIRST NATIONAL
CONFERENCE

REF: (A) STOCKHOLM 1242, (B) STOCKHOLM 994 AND PREVIOUS

1. THE FLEDGLING SWEDISH COMMUNIST WORKER'S PARTY (APK)
WHICH SPLIT FROM THE MAIN SWEDISH COMMUNIST PARTY (VPK)
IN MARCH (SEE REFTELS) HELD ITS FIRST NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MARCH 26-17 IN STOCKHOLM. THE MAJOR PURPOSE OF THE
MEETING WAS TO SOLIDIFY THE NEW PARTY'S LEADERSHIP AND
TO SELECT AN INTERIM EXECUTIVE BOARD WHICH WILL GUIDE THE
PARTY UNTIL THE APK'S PARTY CONGRESS IS HELD IN
NOVEMBER OF THIS YEAR.

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2. SOME 200 REPRESENTATIVES FROM 16 DISTRICTS (OUT OF 21
VPK DISTRICTS) ATTENDED THE CONFERENCE AND ELECTED
RIKSDAGSMAN ROLF HAGEL OF GOTEBOURG, WHO LED THE ORIGINAL
DEFECTORS FROM THE VPK, AS THE INTERIM CHAIRMAN.
RIKSDAGSMAN ALF LOVENBORG OF NORBOTTEN, WHO BRINGS THE
LARGEST SINGLE SEGMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE NEW PARTY, WAS
ELECTED VICE-CHAIRMAN, AND ARNE SODERQUIST, - LEADING

COMMUNIST FIGURE IN STOCKHOLM AND MEMBER OF THE STOCKHOLM CITY COUNCIL, WAS CHOSEN AS PARTY SECRETARY.

3. WHILE VPK OFFICIALS CONTINUED TO CHARACTERIZE THE APK AS A SPLINTER GROUP OF ONLY MARGINAL INFLUENCE IN THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT, HAGEL REPEATED HIS CLAIMS THAT THE NEW PARTY HAS ATTRACTED SOME 4,600 MEMBERS, OR ALMOST ONE-THIRD OF THE VPK MEMBERSHIP. HAGEL ALSO POINTED OUT IN REMARKS TO THE PRESS THAT THE APK HAS NOT CLOSED THE DOOR TO THE VPK AND THAT ELECTION COOPERATION IN 1979 COULD BECOME A REALITY. A PROMINENT MEMBER OF THE VPK EXECUTIVE LATER RESPONDED THAT THE VPK HAS NO INTENTION OF COOPERATING IN ELECTIONS WITH THE APK, AND ADDED "I HAVE DIFFICULTY TAKING THE SUGGESTION SERIOUSLY."

4. THE THEME OF THE CONFERENCE WAS THAT THE MEMBERS OF THE APK ARE "THE RIGHTFUL HEIRS TO THE COMMUNIST TRADITION IN SWEDEN," IN THE WORDS OF ALF LOVENBORG. WHILE HAGEL SPOKE OF THE VPK "WANDERING FROM A REVOLUTIONARY WORKER'S PARTY TO A MIDDLE CLASS PARTY OF RADICAL PHRASES," LOVENBORG CALLED FOR A RETURN TO THE TRADITIONS OF THE SWEDISH COMMUNIST PARTY'S CREATION IN 1917, AND ATTACKED THE "BLUE-YELLOW" BRAND OF NATIONALIST COMMUNISM INTRODUCED BY FORMER VPK LEADER HERMANSSON AND CONTINUED BY PRESENT CHAIRMAN LARS WERNER. HAGEL EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF MARXIST-LENINIST THEORY FOR THE APK AND SAID THE APK'S TASK IS TO CREATE A GROWING POLITICAL AWARENESS IN THE WORKING CLASS, WHICH HAS BEEN NEGLECTED BY THE VPK.

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5. COMMENT: NOW THAT THE APK IS MORE OR LESS FORMALLY ON ITS FEET, WE CAN EXPECT A SERIES OF QUARRELS OVER WHICH PARTY IS REALLY THE WORKER'S PARTY, WHICH REPRESENTS 'TRUE' COMMUNISM IN SWEDEN, ETC. AS FOR THE IMPORTANT QUESTION OF WHETHER THE APK WILL GARNER SUFFICIENT SUPPORT TO IMPERIL THE VPK'S RIKSDAG REPRESENTATION IN THE NEXT ELECTION, HAGEL'S CLAIMS OF SUPPORT ARE ALMOST CERTAINLY EXAGGERATED AND MOST POLITICAL OBSERVERS AT THIS POINT THINK NOT, WITH THE CAVEAT WHAT MUCH CAN HAPPEN IN TWO YEARS.

SMITH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL PARTIES, COMMUNISTS, PARTY MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 29-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STOCKH01348
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770107-1002
Format: TEL
From: STOCKHOLM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977039/aaaaahyh.tel
Line Count: 109
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 01c912bd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STOCKHOLM 1242, 77 STOCKHOLM 994
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16-Sep-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3199549
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SWEDISH COMMUNIST WORKER'S PARTY HOLDS FIRST NATIONAL CONFERENCE
TAGS: PINT, SW
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/01c912bd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009